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ABSTRACT

A 1973-75 federally sponsored study, undertaken by the State of Connecticut and the University of Connecticut, was conducted to determine the employment opportunities for vocational agriculture graduates as well as available community resources for vocational agriculture programs in the State. Objectives of phase 1 of the project were to: (1) compile a literature review related to agricultural employment opportunities and community resources, (2) compile a State master list of farmers and nonfarm agricultural firms, (3) randomly sample a representative number of farmers and agribusiness persons to be interviewed, (4) develop a survey instrument to collect the needed data, (5) develop the interviewing and survey research skills of vocational agriculture teachers, and (6) initiate data collection in high sample concentration areas. A major focus of the survey was on identifying areas that would afford the greatest likelihood of providing employment opportunities for vocational agriculture graduates. Interview preparation involved the development of an interviewing manual, two letters of introduction for obtaining interviews, a vocational agriculture brochure for interviewees, and teacher-training sessions. Although objective data will not be available until phase 2 of the project, some sample interview responses have been included. (Author/EA)

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A SURVEY OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES HAVING IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

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A SURVEY OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES HAVING IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE*

By

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Introduction

This paper is a report of Phase I of a study to determine the employment opportunities for persons who have knowledge and skills in agricultural subjects and to determine the community resources available to programs of vocational agriculture in Connecticut. The study was designed to enumerate job possibilities, to determine where job openings in agriculture are located, to inform farmers and agri-businessmen of the program of vocational agriculture, and to determine what resources in the community could be tapped to enrich the program of vocational agriculture offered in Connecticut.

The need for the study was expressed by Mr. Joseph Murphy, Associate Director, Division of Vocational Education, Connecticut State Department of Education, who expressed the need to know what the future holds for persons who have had training in vocational agriculture. These concerns were indicated at a special session of the Connecticut Consulting Committee for Vocational Agriculture which subsequently recommended that a state-wide survey of employment opportunities be undertaken to determine the need for persons who have knowledge and skill in agricultural subjects.

*Developed as part of a study supported by the Connecticut State Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education, through Part C, Research Funds, Public Law 90-576, Vocational Education Amendments of 1968.

At the same time, the teachers attending the 1973 Connecticut Vocational Agriculture Teachers' Conference were focusing their attention on improving the supervised occupational experience programs of students enrolled in vocational agriculture. The problems and concerns identified by the teachers regarding the location of training stations and the on-the-job placement experiences of students further validated the need for the study. Involvement of the teachers of vocational agriculture in studying the employment opportunities and identifying community resources was deemed critical because the teachers were the ones who would profit most from the data collected and the contacts made in the community. It was for these reasons that the teachers of vocational agriculture agreed to conduct interviews during Phase II of the study.

The anticipated outcomes of this survey are: (1) to have available a listing of the population of farms and non-farm agricultural firms which employ people who need knowledge and skill in agricultural subjects; (2) to have systematically up-dated the teachers of vocational agriculture regarding the location and types of employment opportunities available; and (3) to be able to determine the implications of the study on curriculum, location of facilities, types of facilities and equipment needed, and staff training needs.

The completion of Phase I of the study conducted between November 1, 1973, and June 30, 1974, and the subsequent completion of Phase II, conducted from July 1, 1974 to January 31, 1975, should provide Connecticut with the foundation data needed to keep the program of vocational agriculture abreast of the changing needs of a dynamic agricultural economy.

Background and Rationale

A traditional challenge to vocational education has been to meet the needs of society by providing a well trained and educated labor force. As a result of the 1963 Vocational Education Act[1] and the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968[2], the primary emphasis in vocational education has shifted from meeting the needs of the labor market to meeting the needs of individuals. Yet, it was recognized that if programs of vocational education were to bridge the gap between the needs of individuals and the needs of the labor market, information regarding both was essential. Needs could be met most effectively to the extent that the individuals were prepared for and could find productive satisfying employment in careers which provided enough remuneration to sustain them. Skills developed in a program of vocational education had to be saleable. To find the demand for personnel with skilled training in occupational areas was a proper function of vocational educators.

A second challenge which confronted vocational educators in agriculture was keeping abreast with the changing nature of the agri-business scene. Food production had become the center of attention of almost all consumers. Specialization was at an all time high. At the same time, more and more individuals were interested in maintaining their standard of living by producing food or by developing agricultural knowledges and skills whereby they could supplement their incomes.

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1. Vocational Education Act of 1963, Public Law 88-210, 88th Congress.
2. Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, Public Law 90-576, 90th Congress.

Another challenge facing the agricultural community was making the public aware of the wide range of agriculture related occupations. Although sometimes agriculture was considered only in terms of production, the non-farm agriculture sector offered a variety of employment possibilities. Employment opportunities existed in agricultural communications, conservation, education, processing, recreation, research, and sales and services. As the demand for non-production agricultural skills and services increased there was a changing clientele who wanted, needed and could profit from instruction in agriculture.

The program of vocational agriculture changed to meet the need. As a result of the 1963 legislation, six instructional areas other than production agriculture, or farming, were identified. The six instructional areas were agricultural supply, agricultural products, agricultural resources, agricultural mechanics, ornamental horticulture and forestry. If teachers of vocational agriculture were to offer programs in these areas, they needed to know what employment opportunities existed for graduates, where students could be placed for supervised occupational experience, and what resources on the farms and in the agribusiness firms could be used to enhance and enrich the programs.

Employers, on the other hand, had to be aware that the program of vocational agriculture existed, that it was a potential source of trained personnel, and that present employees could upgrade their knowledge and skills by enrolling in adult courses in agriculture. Employers had to be made aware of the benefit they could receive by employing, on a part-time basis, students who were concurrently studying vocational agriculture. They also had to be made aware of the up-to-date resources which they had to offer and the mutual benefits to be derived from cooperative arrangements

with the vocational agriculture centers.

The time seemed right for a Statewide assessment of employment opportunities for persons having knowledge and skill in agriculture, and of community resources available to those involved in conducting programs of vocational agriculture. The study was designed so that the teachers of vocational agriculture would be involved in collecting the data and disseminating information about the program in their regions.

The project staff would survey the literature, identify the population and sample, develop the interview schedule, and train the teachers to conduct the interviews. It was with this cooperative arrangement in mind that the project was planned and initiated.

Statement of the Problem

In Connecticut, programs of vocational education in agriculture were offered in fourteen regional vocational agriculture centers and in two local high schools. With the demand for vocational agriculture increasing, as evidenced by increasing enrollments, it was essential to have up-dated, documented data regarding farm and non-farm employment opportunities in agriculture, at both State and regional levels. At the State level, such information was needed to assist in planning and in making decisions regarding programs to be developed, curricula to be offered, facilities to be erected or expanded, equipment to be installed, teachers to be prepared and towns and persons to be served.

At the regional level, information was needed so that teachers of vocational agriculture could prepare students for existing employment opportunities in agriculture and so that they could keep abreast of the changing knowledge and skills required by workers employed in agricultural occupations.

Regional data regarding the number and kinds of job opportunities available in agriculture would help the teachers of vocational agriculture fulfill the training, supervised occupational experience program, and placement functions of their jobs. In addition, information regarding community resources available within agribusinesses could provide a base for strengthening the practical and experiential aspects of the education of vocational agriculture students.

Data were needed regarding the following: the number of persons employed in specific job titles in agriculture, projected numbers required in the future, emerging occupational opportunities in agriculture, and trends regarding the level of training and specialization necessary. Such information would be valuable for more effective planning at the State level, and for improving relationships among educators, farmers and agricultural businessmen, at the local and regional levels.

Objectives

The objectives of Phase I of the project, as stated in the proposal, were as follows:

1. To compile a comprehensive review of literature related to employment opportunities and community resources in agriculture.

2. To compile a master list of the names and addresses of farmers and non-farm agricultural firms in Connecticut.

3. To random sample from the population a representative number of farmers and non-farm agricultural firm operators to be interviewed.

4. To develop a survey instrument on which to collect data concerning employment opportunities in agriculture and data that may have implications for program planning and improvement and curriculum development in vocational agriculture.

5. To develop the interviewing and survey research skills of the teachers of vocational agriculture in Connecticut.

6. To initiate data collection in areas having a high sample concentration.

At the end of Phase I, all activities to be accomplished prior to data collection by the teachers of vocational agriculture were completed. Data collection in areas of high concentration was carried over into Phase II of the survey.

Basic Assumptions

The following are the basic assumptions under which the study was conducted:

1. The population of farms and non-farm agricultural firms were truly representative of the agricultural economy of Connecticut.

2. Valid and reliable data would be elicited by the interviewers using the interview schedule developed.

3. There would be relative uniformity in the approach used by the interviewers who attended the training sessions.

4. The interviewees would be willing to cooperate and provide the data requested.

5. All interviews would be completed during July and August, 1974.

Limitations of the Study

The following are the principal limitations of the study:

1. The study included only farms and non-farm agricultural firms employing persons needing knowledge and skills in agricultural subjects. Non-agricultural firms, agencies, institutions and organizations who employ persons who need agricultural knowledge and skills were not included in the survey.

2. The regions were not equal in total population, number of farms, number of non-farm agricultural firms, number of teachers, number of towns served or area.

3. Sampling ratios among regions were not uniform because the number of teachers per region did not correlate with farm and non-farm agricultural population of the region.

4. Backgrounds and approaches of teachers of vocational agriculture varied from those of the graduate research assistants.

The study was undertaken as a result of the joint planning of the Connecticut State Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education and the Department of Higher, Technical and Adult Education, University of Connecticut. Primary emphasis of the study was on employment opportunities and community resources in agriculture as they relate to students of vocational agriculture.

Attention was given to three developmental areas: (1) The review of literature for background, suggested approaches and data requirements; (2) The design and testing of the interview schedule; and (3) The determination of the population and sample of the farm and non-farm sector of the agricultural economy in Connecticut. The latter was one of the most time consuming steps in the study.

A major focus of the survey was on identifying those areas that would afford the greatest likelihood of providing employment opportunities for vocational agriculture graduates. In a 1971 study of the feasibility of covering agricultural workers under employment compensation,[1] it was reported that approximately one third of the agricultural producers in Connecticut hired paid workers. The remainder of the farmers relied heavily on family labor, often farming on only a part-time basis. In view of the need to identify employment opportunities, it was necessary to determine which farmers employed paid help.

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1. Taylor, J. W. and R. O. P. Farrish. The impact of extending unemployment insurance to agriculture in Connecticut, Storrs: University of Connecticut, Department of Agricultural Economics, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, September, 1973.

Although the Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration have reliable lists of farm operators who hired workers during past years, neither agency was able to make its information available for use in the study. Since no one source could provide complete lists of the employing producers, several State agencies and private associations were contacted to contribute to the compilation of lists of farm operators. Among those who contributed were the Connecticut State Department of Agriculture, the Cooperative Extensive Service, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Connecticut; the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture; and the vocational agriculture teachers. With their assistance a population of farmers was obtained from which to draw regional samples.

For the non-farm businesses the first step was to determine the category listings which would be considered agriculturally related. Non-farm agricultural businesses were defined as those which provided agriculturally related products or services. It was felt that those non-agricultural businesses which may employ some persons needing knowledge and skill in agriculture were too numerous to include in the population. Initially, the categories were determined from telephone directory listings, and were refined through staff consultations with educational research and agricultural experts. It was assumed that those non-farm agricultural businessmen were actively advertising in the classified section of the most recent telephone directory were likely to be in business at the time of the survey.

The categories were submitted to the Project Advisory Committee and to the vocational agriculture teachers for their review and modification. Although it was hoped that all areas that provided employment opportunities in agriculture would be included, soon it was recognized that certain limitations would be

necessary. One of the limitations proposed by the Project Advisory Committee was the recommendation to include only those categories for which training in vocational agriculture could be offered. This necessitated the elimination of the many areas which would come under the direction of such agencies as health services or distributive education.

As the names of farms and businesses were identified each was put on a card and coded by town. The 169 towns in Connecticut were divided into regions which corresponded to the areas served by the vocational agriculture centers. Seventeen regions were designated for the study, fourteen of which are served by the vocational agriculture centers, two by local high schools and one region, with no vocational agriculture center, was to be surveyed by graduate research assistants.

The personal interview was deemed to be the best method of gathering data. The vocational agriculture teachers in the State agreed to conduct the interviews during the months of July and August, the beginning of Phase II of the project. It was felt that any biasing effects resulting from the teachers conducting the interviews would be more than offset by the benefits obtained from the interaction of the teacher and the farmer or agri-businessman.

Based on the number of interviewers (vocational agriculture teachers) in each region, a random sample was drawn using a table of random numbers. Farm and non-farm samples were drawn separately according to the ratio of farms to firms in the region. Each teacher was requested to complete twenty interviews. In areas of heavy concentration, project research assistants will be assigned to assist the teachers in the collection of data. The data gathered from these samples will be expanded by region, and unequal percentages of samples will be statistically equalized for statewide summarization.

Funding

Following recommendations developed by the State Vocational Agriculture Consulting Committee, a prospectus was written and submitted for review during August, 1973, to members of the Division of Vocational Education, Connecticut State Department of Education. After the review a proposal was developed and submitted in September, 1973. Approval of the proposal for Phase I of the study, assuring funds from November 1, 1973, through June 30, 1974, was granted. The project was funded under Part C of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, Public Law 90-576.

Technical Assistance

The State Vocational Agriculture Consulting Committee was instrumental in identifying the need for a study of employment opportunities and community resources in vocational agriculture and in recommending that such a study be undertaken. A Project Advisory Committee composed of educational research and agriculture specialists provided guidance in interview schedule design, non-farm category listings, and general project structure. Consultants engaged on a per diem basis for their knowledge and expertise on the areas of research and agriculture contributed to the definition of terms, methods of identifying farm and non-farm agricultural firms, systems of coding, population identifying procedures, interview schedule development and interviewing techniques.

The Connecticut teachers of vocational agriculture helped establish objectives, assisted in the revision of the interview schedule and offered suggestions on sources of population listings. Also helpful with population identification were the Connecticut State Department of Agriculture; the Cooperative Extension Service, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

University of Connecticut; the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture; and the Connecticut State Labor Department.

Workshops and Conferences

Meetings with the Vocational Agriculture Teachers. Since it was believed that the data collected would have the greatest implications for the teachers of vocational agriculture, their input regarding objectives and interview schedule development was considered a vital part of the design of the study. To obtain their suggestions, a series of workshops was scheduled. At the first meeting the teachers were given an overview of the nature and purpose of the study and were requested to provide the research team with information regarding their assessment of data requirements. From this list of concerns and the objectives of the Division of Vocational Education of the State Department of Education, preliminary interview schedule development was begun.

A subsequent meeting was held at a Regional Vocational Agriculture Center in each of the four districts in the State. The agenda for these meetings included interview schedule critique, survey techniques and a review of the non-farm category population. At the last workshop session for all teachers, the final revised interview schedule was discussed in detail, data collection techniques were reviewed and survey materials were distributed.

Meetings with the Project Advisory Committee. In order to insure that the research was proceeding in the proper direction, the recommendations of a Project Advisory Committee composed of knowledgeable people in the areas of educational research and agriculture were sought. The Committee

reviewed the interview schedule after its many revisions for ease of administration and appropriateness of content. In addition, the proposed non-farm population categories were considered in relation to areas in which training in vocational agriculture could be offered. The Project Advisory Committee addressed its attention to the non-farm category listings and indicated those categories of business which it believed should be included as agriculturally related, and therefore, relevant to the study. The Project Advisory Committee met three times as a whole and provided individual guidance on several other occasions.

Reports and Publicity

In order to advise persons interested in the nature and progress of the study, reports were made to various groups including the Connecticut Consulting Committee for Vocational Agriculture, the Connecticut Agriculture Information Council, and the Governor's Task Force on Land Preservation. Items were featured in the farm column of the Hartford Courant, the State's most widely circulated newspaper. A newsletter was sent to the vocational agriculture teachers and others directly involved in the study and a quarterly progress report was submitted to those responsible for funding the project, advising them of the project's time-cost-performance status.

Outcomes of Phase I

Summary Review of Literature: A comprehensive review of research related to employment opportunities and community resources in agriculture was compiled as background for the project. The main sources of reference for this review were data searches conducted by the New England Research Application Center and Phi Delta Kappa. The following descriptors were used to identify relevant area of research:

Adult Farmer Education
Agribusiness
Agricultural Chemical Occupations
Agricultural Colleges
Agricultural Competencies
Agricultural Education
Agricultural Engineering
Agricultural Engineering Occupations
Agricultural Laborers
Agricultural Machinery Occupations
Agricultural Occupations
Agricultural Skills
Agricultural Supply Occupations
Agricultural Technicians
Agricultural Trends
Career Opportunities
Community Employment Services
Community Resources
Demand Occupations
Employment Opportunities
Employment Patterns
Employment Potential
Employment Programs
Employment Projections
Employment Services
Employment Statistics
Employment Trends
Farm Labor Supply
Farm Mechanics (Occupation)
Farm Occupations
Job Placement
Job Training
Off-Farm Agricultural Occupations
Occupational Surveys
Skilled Occupations
Vocational Adjustment
Vocational Agriculture
Vocational Agriculture Teachers
Vocational Education Teachers

The review of literature focused on three areas of concern, namely, farms, the non-farm agricultural sector, and community resources. Included in the summary of farm-related information are past and future employment trends, educational requirements and training needs. The need for training, agricultural competencies and education are summarized in the non-farm section of the review. Types of community resources, reactions of

employers to requests for community programs, the need for such programs and how to establish them are described in the final segment.

Regional Listings of Farms and Non-Farm Agricultural Firms: In Connecticut, programs are offered in fourteen regional vocational agriculture centers and in two local high schools. They were serving 144 of the 169 towns in the State. Staffs in the regional centers ranged in size from one to four teachers and covered regions which ranged from one to 22 towns.

At the conclusion of Phase II of the study, listings of the names and addresses of the farms and non-farm agricultural firms which formed the population base for each region will be made available to the vocational agriculture teachers in their respective regions. The lists have a two-fold purpose: (1) They will facilitate the teachers' collection of data on a continuing basis so that eventually teachers may contact all farms and non-farm agricultural firms in their regions, and (2) They will serve as a useful reference for the teachers in continuing school-community interaction and cooperation.

Interview Schedule: Many revisions, consultations and meetings revolved around the development of an instrument which would accurately and efficiently elicit needed information on employment opportunities and community resources within Connecticut's agricultural businesses. Among the questions the study was designed to answer were the following:

1. What type of agricultural businesses exist in Connecticut, and what are their functions?
2. What employment opportunities exist in these businesses?
3. What are the job titles requiring knowledge and skill in agriculture?
4. How many persons are presently employed in these jobs, and how many will be employed in five years?

5. How difficult is it to find employees for these jobs, and what are the average turnover rates?

6. What educational levels are required to enter these jobs, and what are the wages in these jobs?

7. What community resources are available within the agricultural businesses which might enhance the vocational agriculture program?

Initially, the many nice-to-know type questions were included in the interview schedule. However, it was believed that a shorter, more concise format that included need-to-know type questions would produce better results in the specific areas under consideration. One of the items deleted was a study of competencies. Because of the availability of several detailed competency surveys, the time it would take to collect adequate data, and the minimal amount of new information that would probably be revealed, it was decided that competency questions would be eliminated.

In the preparation of the survey schedule attention was given to coding and ease of handling. The project research staff assumed the major responsibility for developing the survey schedule. Drafts of the proposed interview schedule were reviewed periodically by the Project Advisory Committee, the consultants and the vocational agriculture teachers. The survey schedule was printed and distributed to the vocational agriculture teachers and three project staff members who will utilize the schedule in the study. Findings of the survey will be tabulated and summarized in Phase II of the project.

Interview Manual: A 19 page Interview Manual was developed by the administrative staff to present the interviewing methods and procedures to be

followed and to detail each item of the survey schedule for consistency and comparability of use. A preliminary edition of the manual was reviewed with the teachers of vocational agriculture at the district training meetings. A revised manual reflecting the suggested survey schedule changes proposed by the vocational agriculture teachers was distributed and discussed in detail at the final conference workshop.

It was felt that in addition to providing a reference containing interview techniques, such a manual would be invaluable in answering specific questions pertaining to the instrument design, rationale and application. Thorough understanding of the purpose of each item and the recording format of the schedule was felt to be essential. The manual and training sessions were structured to accomplish this goal.

Introductory Letters: In order to facilitate the obtaining of interviews, two letters of introduction to the study were developed for the use of the interviewers. The letters which indicated the purpose and importance of the study were signed by Fenton P. Futtner, Commissioner of Agriculture, Connecticut State Department of Agriculture. One letter announcing the interview was to be sent a week or two ahead of the intended visit. The second letter, which was to be carried by the interviewer, confirmed his association with the announced survey and reiterated the importance of the study to the businessman or farmer. In addition, name plates were provided by the teachers of vocational agriculture from Lyman Hall High School, Wallingford, and distributed to all interviewers to further identify them as survey team members.

Summary of Interview Form: A summary of interview form was developed to aid the teacher in his future contacts with the person interviewed. It was designed to serve as the personal record of the teacher's observations and comments and as his guide to the community resources available within his region.

Vocational Agriculture Brochure: To acquaint the interviewee with regional vocational agriculture programs, a brochure was developed listing the centers where programs are offered, instructional areas in which training is available and whom to contact for information. In addition, national and State statistics and information regarding the role and purpose of the Future Farmers of America were included. It was hoped that leaving the brochure with the farmer or agribusinessman would be an indication that the teachers were interested in serving his interests as well as gathering data for the future and benefit of the program.

Teacher Interview Training: The teachers of vocational agriculture in Connecticut participated in two half-day interview training sessions prior to Phase II data collection. The purpose of these sessions was to provide the teachers with an overview of the background, objectives and methods of the study, to develop basic interview techniques, to familiarize the teachers with the interview schedule and related materials, to provide an opportunity for teachers to ask questions and to express their opinions.

In order to allow time for maximum interaction and input, the first session was repeated in four district meetings held at vocational agriculture centers across the State. Among the training procedures utilized were videotaped role-play of interviews, summary hand-outs of do's and don'ts

of interviewing and a step-by-step review of the items on the interview schedule. Each teacher was given an interview manual to read prior to the second session.

The second training meeting was held during the morning session of a Statewide conference for all teachers of vocational agriculture. At this meeting, which took place the week before interviewing was to begin, revisions made as a result of the previous input of the teachers were explained. Sample interview schedules were filled out and questions were answered. It was believed that responding to questions and problems at a Statewide gathering of all prospective interviewers would provide a standardization of response, which in turn would promote uniformity of approach and insure greater comparability of results.

Subjective Results and Implications: Although the objective data regarding employment opportunities and community resources will not be available until the completion of Phase II of the project, certain subjective data were obtained from teacher-interviewers who were enrolled in a graduate course at the University of Connecticut during the fall semester, 1974. Following are sample responses from the teachers regarding the survey questions. The responses are based upon personal interviews with farmers and agribusinessmen and should serve as subjective indicators of changes needed and the direction to be taken by the program of vocational agriculture in Connecticut in the future.

1. What areas of the vocational agriculture program should be added or re-emphasized?

- more courses or units on small animal care

- more units on human relationships
- more realistic guidance and job orientation
- more instruction on agribusiness management, customer relations, salesmanship, promotion, and product knowledge
- more adult courses on agribusiness management
- more instruction in all areas of ornamental horticulture
- more emphasis on and practice of practical skills
- more use of production records and records of all kinds
- more emphasis on private ownership of small agribusiness
- more emphasis on basic agricultural mechanics and small engine repair
- more units on dog care, breeding and management
- more instruction on chemical application, laws, and restrictions
- more units on horse management and care
- more adult courses on agricultural business skills
- more instruction on career opportunities

2. What areas of the vocational agriculture program should be phased out or de-emphasized? What shifts of emphasis or changes should be made?

The consensus of the respondents was that no areas should be phased out. It was agreed that certain areas should be de-emphasized or the emphasis should be shifted.

- Continue basic production agriculture as the core of agricultural education, but shift emphasis to include care and management of small animals and pleasure animals

- De-emphasize instruction in areas in which few job opportunities are available and shift emphasis to agribusiness skills

- Continue to offer a broad program and focus on skills, concepts and content that can be generalized to many areas of agriculture

- De-emphasize traditional production agriculture and emphasize instruction in agricultural service and related occupations

- Increase emphasis in the care, repair and maintenance of agricultural equipment

- Place more emphasis on enterprises which provide services for urban and suburban people

- Shift emphasis to serving adults in all areas of horticulture and ornamental horticulture

3. What community resources were identified whereby the program of vocational agriculture could be enriched?

   Vocational Agriculture teachers found that:

   - Many farmers and agribusiness persons were willing to:

     1. Serve as resource speakers in the classroom
     2. Serve as resource persons at their place of business for groups or individuals
     3. Provide observation experiences
     4. Employ students for supervised occupational experience
     5. Hire vocational agriculture graduates
     6. Offer facilities for FFA activities or class instruction
     7. Serve as a field trip site
     8. Provide demonstrations at the place of business or in the school
     9. Lend equipment for instructional purposes

- The vocational agriculture program could serve farmers and agribusiness persons by:

    1. Offering adult courses
    2. Preparing qualified vocational agriculture graduates
    3. Making available selected school resources
    4. Providing information about the vocational agriculture program
    5. Sponsoring workshops and seminars on agricultural issues

- Many qualified people were willing to serve as members of the advisory committee
- Farmers and agribusiness persons were very cooperative
- Many untapped resources existed in the community
- Farmers and agribusiness persons are interested in the program of vocational agriculture
- Many farmers and agribusiness persons are potential contributors to the FFA Foundation

Conclusions

Although the employment opportunity and community resource data have not been analyzed at this time, it can be concluded that the survey has made and will continue to make a significant impact on the program of vocational agriculture in Connecticut. As a result of the person-to-person interviews conducted on a systematic basis, the teachers of vocational agriculture have a more realistic understanding of the needs of farmers and agribusiness persons, the qualifications required by agricultural workers, and the resources available to the program of vocational agriculture. Farmers and agribusiness persons have a better understanding of what the program of vocational agriculture can do for them and what they can do for it. The survey, at both the

State and regional level, will have many implications for the further development of vocational agriculture in Connecticut.